

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING SAMUEL
HICKENLOOPER, TYLER JOHN-
SON, AND ALEXANDER MAURITS

HON. JOHN A. BOEHNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 30, 2014

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Samuel Hickenlooper, Tyler Johnson, and Alexander Maurits for designing the 8th District of Ohio's winning application for the 2014 Congressional Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Competition, "The House App Contest." The three Ross High School students developed a mobile app called, "The Cryptographer," which allows users to teach themselves various types of digital encryption and decryption. Their entry was selected from many submitted throughout the 8th District of Ohio. Entries were reviewed by an independent panel of judges and evaluated based on innovation, appeal, production quality, and presentation.

This year marked the first year of the Congressional STEM Competition. Established by this House in 2013, the competition is a nationwide event that engages students' creativity and encourages their participation in STEM education fields. Our first competition in the 8th District could not have been a success without this year's judges: Dr. James Kiper; Dr. Cathy Bishop-Clark; Mike Stahr; and Kurt Johnson. I would like to thank them for their service throughout this year's competition, and for their continued dedication to STEM education.

Education in the STEM fields is critical to preparing America's students to enter a competitive global economy. STEM fields are the future of job creation in this country, and I appreciate how competitions and opportunities, such as the Congressional STEM Competition, encourage our young people to take on technical challenges that will help them develop proficiency in these areas. As I've said before, we can't have a strong economy without preparing the next generation to fill the jobs and drive the innovations that will keep America competitive.

Again, congratulations to this year's winners and thank you to all who participated in this year's competition. I look forward to seeing what innovations next year's Congressional STEM Competition will bring.

RECOGNIZING MS. ALIA EL-ASSAR

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 30, 2014

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize one of my constituents, Ms. Alia El-Assar, for her reception of an English Teaching Assistantship through the Fulbright Program. A student at Rollins Col-

lege, Ms. El-Assar traveled to Mexico in September 2013 where she will be teaching until May 2015.

The Fulbright Program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, is supported by the United States, participating foreign governments and the private sector. Established by Congress in 1946, the Program's purpose is to "build mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the rest of the world." Fulbright awardees are selected for academic excellence, professional achievements or demonstrated leadership in their fields.

I commend Ms. El-Assar for her commitment to education, and I thank her for representing the United States through the Fulbright Program in Mexico.

H.R. 4031

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 30, 2014

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I voted against H.R. 4031, a bill named the "Department of Veterans Affairs Management Accountability Act of 2014", because I don't throw babies out with the bathwater.

Let me explain. When our fellow Americans put on our country's uniform in service to our nation, we owe it to them to repay that service. When these Americans retire the uniform, as veterans they deserve everything a grateful nation can offer—our love, respect, gratitude and, just as importantly, the care and attention they may now need upon coming home.

Reports that the Department of Veterans Affairs failed to provide many of our veterans the care and service they have earned are more than disturbing, and if true, warrant decisive action. With facts in hand, our government must be prepared to move swiftly to right the wrong and hold people accountable.

H.R. 4031 is a bill which is being portrayed as a fix to the troubling reports of mismanagement and mistreatment at VA facilities. It is hardly that. H.R. 4031 would go well beyond giving the Secretary of Veterans Affairs the authority to fire personnel in this particular case of potential mismanagement. This bill makes permanent and reactionary changes to longstanding rules governing the hiring and firing of people holding positions of public responsibility. It would paint responsible, hard-working public servants with the same brush as those who may have recklessly mismanaged VA services.

If H.R. 4031 became law, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs could hire or fire someone based on a whim. It would forever and irreparably damage our ability to hire and retain the best and brightest based on merit and experience. This bill would bring back the dark days when hiring and firing decisions within our federal workforce were driven by political influence and patronage.

The vast majority of veterans will tell you that they have received the quality of care that they have earned and deserve at VA health centers. But anything less than 100 percent satisfaction for our veterans is not good enough. That's why we must swiftly and decisively investigate these alarming reports of mismanagement at the Department of Veterans Affairs. I will do anything and everything I can to live up to that standard. But I will not lump truly dedicated, hard-working public servants together with those who have failed in their fundamental obligation to serve and care for our veterans. I will not throw the baby out with the bathwater—and I do not believe America's veterans want us to do that either.

COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE,
AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015

SPEECH OF

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 29, 2014

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4660) making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes:

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas.

As a longtime supporter of the Census Bureau's work and the American Community Survey, I urge the Committee to keep this survey as current law provides.

The ACS is a vital resource for all of us in Congress, the federal agencies, and private businesses.

The accurate, timely data collected through this survey is the basis for over \$415 billion allocated by the federal government to states and localities—over two-thirds of all federal grant funding.

Accurate data ensures that these federal dollars go where they are needed—and where Congress intended. This amendment would undermine the accuracy of the ACS and deprive our agencies of this vital information.

But it's not just government. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce and its members know the value of census data. The Chamber stated that "ACS data points are critical for business decision-making and long range planning."

Businesses from restaurants, to retailers, to developers know that accurate information about our population is critical for their marketing and expansion activity. This amendment would remove a crucial recourse that helps businesses expand and create jobs.

What's more, we know what would happen if this amendment passes.

In 2003, the Census Bureau tested a voluntary ACS to disastrous results. Response rates plummeted by at least 20 percent, and

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